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~~SECRET~~ 161120Z APR 72 CITE SAIGON 47444

PRIORITY DIRECTOR

Star to Doc

16 APR IN 586998

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REF: DIRECTOR 255339*

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1. AFTER PRELIMINARY MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR ~~SEBUNKER~~ ^{FILE} [REDACTED] AND WHITEHOUSE AND COS (MOSTLY ON PROCEDURAL MATTERS) GENERAL HAIG CAME TO COS' OFFICE AT 1030 HOURS 16 APRIL. THE FOLLOWING POINTS OF SIGNIFICANCE OCCURRED DURING 45 MINUTE MEETING IN WHICH DCOS AND [REDACTED] ALSO PARTICIPATED:

A. [REDACTED] OF INDICATIONS/ANALYSIS BRANCH PRESENTED THE CURRENT MILITARY PICTURE TO UPDATE GENERAL HAIG ON LOCAL SITUATION. GENERAL HAIG HAD QUESTIONS ON THE USE OF ARTILLERY BY NVA AND SVN FORCES IN MR 1, PARTICULARLY DURING THE EARLY STAGES; OCCURRENCES PRIOR TO AND DURING THE ARVN ^{W/} WITHDRAWAL FROM FSB CHARLIE; OBJECTIVES OF NVA 1ST DIVISION AROUND MR-4 WESTERN BORDER; THE REINFORCEMENT CAPABILITIES OF ARVN FOR THE AN LOC BATTLE; USE OF TANKS AT AN LOC; HOW WELL THE 5TH DIVISION HAD PERFORMED; AND THE ATTACK ON HAIPHONG HARBOR DURING THE NIGHT OF 15/16 APRIL.

B. COS SUMMARY OF THE BRIEFING MADE THE

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POINTS THAT ARVN HAD PERFORMED BETTER THAN PUBLISHED ACCOUNTS WOULD INDICATE, PARTICULARLY THE 3RD DIVISION IN QUANG TRI, AND IN CONTEXT OF ENEMY POTENTIAL NOW AND AGAINST BACKGROUND OF TET 68. MOST ARVN UNITS "BEND WITH THE WIND" AND, AFTER SHAKING DOWN, DO A GOOD JOB NOT ALWAYS ON WHAT WE CONSIDER OPTIMUM SCHEDULE. HOWEVER, U.S. TACAIR, B-52'S AND LOGISTICS AIRCRAFT HAVE BEEN VITAL INGREDIENTS TO HOLDING THE NVA. DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW ARVN COULD HAVE HELD AND RALLIED WITHOUT U.S. AIR. NVA USE OF SOVIET EQUIPMENT HAS NOT BEEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH MODERN ARMORED DOCTRINE. AS RESULT AFTER FIRST FEW DAYS IN QUANG TRI, TANKS HAVE NOT HAD DESIRED SHOCK EFFECT. SAM FIRINGS HAVE BEEN INEFFECTIVE DUE TO USAGE INCOMPATIBLE WITH SYSTEM DESIGN.

C. GENERAL HAIG ASKED WHY OFFENSIVE HAS NOT YET TAKEN PLACE IN THE B-3 FRONT. COS RESPONDED THAT WE HAVE NO INTEL ON CAUSES FOR DELAY. CAUSES COULD HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVENESS OF ARCLIGHT AND PREEMPTIVE ACTION BY GENERAL DZU'S FORCES. HOWEVER, THERE ARE CONTINUING INDICATIONS OF ENEMY OFFENSIVE PLANNING IN KONTUM PROVINCE. GENERAL HAIG EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER AMOUNT OF ENEMY MATERIEL THAT HAD REACHED THE AN LOC FRONT

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IN MR 3. DISCUSSION OF THE MARCH 1972 TRANSPORTATION OFFENSIVE AND LONG TERM BUILD-UP FOLLOWED. COS SUMMARIZED HIS FEELINGS ON THE DETERMINATION OF HANOI, AND THE EFFECTS OF THE OFFENSIVE ON THE PACIFICATION PROGRAM (PARTICULARLY AS APPLIED TO MR-4). THE POSITION OF BUDDHISTS AND OTHER ELEMENTS WAS DISCUSSED AS WAS THE ALIGNMENT OF POLITICAL FACTIONS IN SAIGON IN RARE DISPLAY OF ANTI-COMMUNIST SOLIDARITY. REACTION OF THE VIETNAMESE TOWARD THE HANDLING OF REFUGEES WAS STATED TO BE GOOD. PERFORMANCE OF THE VNAF IN COMBAT WAS REPORTED TO BE EXCELLENT. HOWEVER, FROM COS' PERSONAL OBSERVATION AS WELL AS CAN THO REPORTS THE UTILIZATION OF LIGHT AIRCRAFT FOR INFORMATION GATHERING THROUGHOUT MR 4 WAS NOT AGGRESSIVE AND THIS IN PART EXPLAINS CONTINUING ABILITY OF NVA/VC TO MOVE LARGE BODIES OF MEN UNDETECTED THROUGH SPARSELY POPULATED FLATLAND.

D. IN RESPONSE TO GENERAL HAIG'S QUESTION REGARDING DESIRABILITY OF POSSIBLE REVISIONS IN ARMY AND CORDS REDUCTION PROGRAMS AS RESULT OF CURRENT OFFENSIVE, COS STATED HE COULD NOT COMMENT THIS SUBJECT AS THIS WAS OUTSIDE HIS OWN FIELD OF COMPETENCE.

E. GENERAL HAIG ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY PROBLEMS

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WITH HEADQUARTERS IN THE RESOLUTION OF WHICH HE COULD ASSIST OR IF THERE WERE ANY MESSAGES THAT COS WANTED TRANSMITTED THROUGH HIM. COS REPLIED IN NEGATIVE TO FOREGOING. HOWEVER, COS SAID THAT THERE WAS ONE GENERAL INTELLIGENCE PROBLEM OF WHICH GENERAL HAIG SHOULD BE AWARE BECAUSE IT HAS IMMEDIATE BEARING ON U.S. RESPONSE CAPABILITY TO NORTH VIETNAM MILITARY ACTIONS.

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REDUCTION U.S. EFFORT WAS LOGICAL IN TERMS OF OVERALL PICTURE AS IT EXISTED UNTIL SHORTLY, BUT IN PRESENT SITUATION THERE MAY BE DIFFICULTIES WITH TARGETTING FOR CONTINUING AIR EFFORT. WE SAID DETAILS OF THIS WELL UNDERSTOOD AT MACV AND WE MERELY WANTED TO FLAG IT FOR HIS ATTENTION. (SENDING MORE DETAILED MESSAGE ON STATION VIEWS THROUGH OTHER CHANNELS.)

2. GENERAL HAIG MADE NOTES THROUGHOUT SESSION, WHICH HELD IN RELAXED, FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE. NOTHING OF CONTROVERSIAL NATURE CAME UP.

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3. GENERAL HAIG VISITING BIEN HOA AFTERNOON 16 APRIL AND COS SUGGESTED THAT HE CONTACT CHIEF OF BASE THERE.

4. PRIOR TO GENERAL HAIG'S MEETING, COS HAD HALF-HOUR TALK WITH WHITE HOUSE STAFFER DEAN WHO ACCOMPANYING THE GENERAL. TALK MOSTLY ON DELTA WHERE DEAN GOING THIS AFTERNOON 16 APRIL. GP-1.

S E C R E T

*Guidance for probable COS meeting with General Haig.